



## State of New Jersey

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Remarks of Brian O. Lipman, Director, Division of Rate Counsel, regarding S4689  
(Directs BPU to study feasibility of developing advanced reactors Statewide)  
Presented at the Senate Environment and Energy Committee Meeting

December 1, 2025

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to discuss S4689 (Directs BPU to study feasibility of developing advanced reactors Statewide). My name is Brian Lipman, and I am the New Jersey Director of the Division of Rate Counsel. As you are aware, the Division of Rate Counsel represents and protects the interest of all consumers---residential customers, small business customers, small and large industrial customers, schools, libraries and other institutions in our communities. Rate Counsel is a party in cases where New Jersey utilities or businesses seek changes in their rate and/or services. Rate Counsel also gives consumers a voice in setting energy, water and telecommunications policy that will affect the rendering of utility services well into the future.

It is ironic indeed that this bill comes before the committee today. While the committee decides whether to commit billions of dollars to build nuclear power, this bill first looks to see whether nuclear power plants are feasible in New Jersey, and if so, what barriers exist. In other words, this bill seeks to see if there actually is a problem, while the other bill (S4876) blindly throws ratepayer money into the pockets of unregulated, private companies and hopes for the best. This bill directs the BPU to study the feasibility, regulatory hurdles and possible funding sources for small nuclear reactors. Rate Counsel supports such a study and believes that the results could aid the State as we determine the next phase in planning needed generation for new jersey. Indeed, it makes inherently more sense to determine what is needed before committing billions in limited ratepayer funds to an untested, new technology. Rate Counsel does, however question whether BPU is the appropriate agency to conduct this study. The BPU does not regulate generation and has little expertise on this issue. The lack of expertise is compounded by the fact that the technology does not currently exist for commercial deployment. This makes the timing of this study complicated, as there will not be a proven, real-world technology to study for purposes of fulfilling the goals of this bill.

While supporting the goals of this bill, Rate Counsel is concerned about amendments to the original bill. The initial draft of this bill did not draw upon ratepayer funds. Absent any grants or federal funding available to conduct the study, an appropriation from the general fund is the most appropriate means of funding the proposed study.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.